

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAO PA 02365 121808Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 PA-02 PRS-01 INR-07 INRE-00
SSO-00 /027 W

-----063389 121813Z /53

O 121700Z SEP 77

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7986

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SAO PAULO 2365

USIAC

USIA FOR IOP/N, ILA

STATE FOR ARA/PAF

BRASILIA FOR USIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, US, BR, PN/PQ

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT ON PANAMA TREATY

1. FOLLOW-UP COVERAGE ON CANAL TREATY SIGNING EVENTS MODERATELY PAID IN SAO PAULO WEEKEND (SEPT. 10-12) PAPERS. MOST STORIES RUN INSIDE, WITH SHORT FRONT PAGE RESUMES. PREDOMINANT TOPICS ARE: PREPARATIONS OF CONSERVATIVE GROUPS TO EIGHT THE TREATIES IN THE SENATE; STATEMENT BY SENATOR PAUL LAXALT; LINOWITZ PRESS CONFERENCE, STRESSING THAT FIFTY SENATORS SUPPORT THE TREATIES; HARRIS POLL SHOWING DECREASE OF CARTER'S POPULARITY CAUSED BY THE TREATIES (AND THE LANCE CASE); RETURN OF LATAM LEADERS TO THEIR COUNTRIES: WELCOME OF TORRIJOS IN PANAMA CITY AND HIS TELEGRAM TO CASTRO

2. STORIES ON CARTER BILATERAL TALKS WITH LATAM PRESIDENTS
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ALSO RECEIVED MAJOR COVERAGE, WITH PRESS POINTING OUT THAT HUMAN RIGHTS WERE THE CENTRAL THEME OF DISCUSSIONS AND THAT SOME LATAM LEADERS PROMISED IMPROVEMENT IN THIS AREA.

3. SAMPLE HEADLINES: "TREATY AND LANCE ERODE JIMMY CARTER'S IMAGE" AND "LATIN AMERICA BOWS TO U.S. PRESSURE" (ON HUMAN RIGHTS), BOTH O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO (SEPT. 10); "CARTER WARNS

VIDELA AND MENDEZ ON TV" (FOLHA DE SAO PAULO);"U.S.; THE GREAT CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CANAL TREATY" (DIARIO DE SAO PAULO); "U.S. CONSERVATIVES PREPARE CAMPAIGN TO OPPOSE THE TREATIES" (BUSINESS-ORINTED GAZETA MERCANTIL). UNDER TITLE "PANAMA AND HUMAN RIGHTS", FOLHA DE SAO PAULO NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT PAULO FRANCIS SAYS: "IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE FINAL VOTING (ON THE CANAL TREATIES), WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE JUNE OR JULY 1978, BEFORE THE NOVEMBER CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION, WHEN EVERYTHING WILL DEPEND ON THE TEMPERATURE OF DEMAGOGUERY AND CHAUVINISM IN THE COUNTRY...IT IS RARE TO FIND AN INFORMED OPINION HERE WHICH DOES NOT SUPPORT THE TREATIES RATIFICATION. HOWEVER, SINCE THE PANAMA CANAL WAS CLEARLY AN IMPERIALISM CREATION OF THE U.S., ALL ITS HISTORY SPEAKS AGAINST THE CONCILIATORY TONE WITH WHICH CARTER WANTS TO CHARACTERIZE HIS ADMINISTRATION...NOTHING ASSURES THE TREATIES RATIFICATION; RIGHT WINGERS ARE PREPARING A WIDE CLEVER CHAUVENIST CAMPAIGN, SEEKING TO SHOW THAT THE U.S. IS 'GIVING' THE CANAL TO THE PANAMANIAN AND WORSE, WITH A PISTOL POINTED AT ITS HEAD...THERE IS A SUSPICION THAT CARTER WILL KEEP THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN TEMPORARILY ON FILE IN LATAM UNTIL THE TREATIES ARE APPROVED...THE DICTATORS OF 'IMPORTANT COUNTRIES' IN LATAM GAINED A NEW BREATH OF LIFE AND LONGEVITY THAT THEY WILL PROBABLY CONSIDER PERMANENT IF CARTER SHOWS WEAKENESS BEFORE THE CONGRESS BY NOT CARRYING OUT THE RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES." CONSERVATIVE DIARIO DE SAO PAULO (SEPT. 10) EDITORIAL HEADED UNCLASSIFIED

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"UNDER THE SIGN OF COOPERATION" SAYS THAT FROM THE TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY "EMERGED" THE DESIRE THAT THE RESOLUTION OF THIS COMPLEX ISSUE MAY MARK, IN FACT, THE BEGINNING OF AN ERA OF PEACEFUL UNDERSTANDING IN THIS HEMISPHERE, EVEN ON THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES...IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOTE THE ATMOSPHERE OF GOOD WILL THAT RADIATES FROM THE U.S. PANAMA ACCORDS...SUCH DEVELOPMENTS COULD NOT BUT INVOLVE BRAZIL AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE USG. PRESS CORRESPONDENTS WHO COVERED THE CEREMONY REPORT UNANIMOUSLY THAT THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN IN RELATION TO OUR (BRAZIL'S) NUCLEAR PROGRAM TEND TO HAVE BEEN DILUTED BY THE NEW POLICIES THAT THE U.S. CHANCERY IS TRYING TO PUT INTO PRACTICE. ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN, FOR INSTANCE, HAS ALREADY MADE HIMSELF AN SPOKESMAN FOR SUCH SIGNIFICANT 'TOUNANT'... WHEN HE ACKNOWLEDGE OF BRAZIL'S EFFORTS TO DEVELOP ITS NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR BEACEFUL PURPOSES: THIS IS A NEW LANGUAGE ON PART OF THE U.S., AND DESRVES NOTICE"

4. BUSINESS-ORINTED GAZETA MERCANTIL SEPT. 10-12 WEEKEND EDITION CARRIED FEATURE ON SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PANAMA CANAL FOR WORLD TRADE AND FOR U.S. GRAIN PRODUCING STATES. STORY SAYS THAT FIVE PERCENT OF WORLD TRADE VOLUME GOES THROUGH

THE CANAL YEARLY AND THAT ITS CLOSING WOULD HARDLY AFFECT
U.S. AND OTHER MARITIME POWERS. "HOWEVER" - SAYS MERCANTIL -
""SEVERAL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES WOULD FACE A CONSIDERABLE
INCREASE IN EXPENDITURES FOR TRANSPORTATION".
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TREATY SIGNATURE, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SAOPA02365
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770330-0054
Format: TEL
From: SAO PAULO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770974/aaaackfl.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 55680548-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1306979
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEDIA REACTION REPORT ON PANAMA TREATY
TAGS: SOPN, PDIP, EWWT, US, BR, PN, PQ
To: USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/55680548-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009